

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 058931

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TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, H. A.)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REPORT, SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 1975

NO. 26

FOR AMBASSADOR ANDERSON FROM S/PRS

SUMMARY: SATURDAY MORNING GWERTZMAN,MILLS AND BERGER STORIES ALL FOCUS ON ISRAELI REACTION TO LATEST EGYPTIAN DISENGAGEMENT IDEAS. TIMES PAGE ONE HEADLINES "COOL" ISRAELI REACTION; SUN FRONT PAGE HEAD CALLED IT "CAUTIOUS" END SUMMARY.

1. NYTIMES,GWERTZMAN, JERUSALEM, 3/14: AN ISRAELI OFFICIAL SAID TODAY THAT EGYPT'S LATEST IDEAS FOR A NEW SINAI AGREEMENT FELL SHORT OF WHAT WAS NEEDED FOR AN ACCORD BUT ADDED THAT HE EXPECTED ISRAEL TO GIVE HAK CONCRETE VIEWS OF HER OWN TO KEEP NEGOTIATIONS GOING.

ISRAELI OFFICIAL SAID ISRAEL'S INITIAL EVALUATION OF SADAT'S "CONCRETE IDEAS" GIVEN TO HAK IN ASWAN LAST NIGHT, WAS UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 058931

GENERALLY UNENTHUSASTIC. BUT HE SAID HE EXPECTED GOVT TO RECOMMEND AND RECEIVE APPROVAL FROM CABINET ON SUNDAY, AUTHORIZATION FOR A MORE FLEXIBLE NEGOTIATING MANDATE.

THIS WOULD FORMALLY EMPOWER RABIN'S NEGOTIATING TEAM TO BEGIN DISCUSSING IN SPECIFIC DETAIL WITH HAK CONDITIONS IT WOULD DEMAND FOR GIWING UP TERRITORY EGYPT REGARDS AS A MINIMUM.

IN ASWAN, FM FAHMYSAID EGYPT WAS CONSIDERING POSSIBILITY OF EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI MILITARY COMMISION UNDER NEW DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT.

LESS THAN HALF AN HOUR AFTER HAK HAD BRIEFED RABIN AND HIS TOP AIDES, ISRAELI OFFICIAL TOLD REPORTERS AT KING DAVID HOTEL THAT EGYPTIAN IDEAS WERE STILL UNDER STUDY, BUT INITIAL REACTION WAS THAT THERE WAS "A LONG WAY TO GO" BEFORE AGREEMENT COULD BE REACHED.

OFFICIAL, WHO HAD BEEN AUTHORIZED BY RABIN TO MAKE HIS STATEMENTS, SAID WHILE A "FEW" EGYPTIAN RESPONSES WERE ACCEPTABLE, OTHERS WERE "INADEQUATE AND INSUFFICIENT" AND THAT, OVERALL "WE DID NOT FEEL WE HAD CONCRETE ANSWERS WE WERE LOOKING FOR."

COOL RECEPTION GIVEN SADAT'S IDEAS WAS NOT UNEXPECTED. ISRAELIS WANTED TO DEFLATE OPTIMISM IN EGYPTIAN PRESS THAT AN AGREEMENT WAS IMMINENT, AND RABIN CLEARLY WANTED TO ASSURE ISRAELIS THAT HE WAS TAKING A FIRM STAND IN NEGOTIATIONS.

PERHAPS INADVERTENTLY, ISRAELI REACTION CAUSED CONCERN TO HAK'S PARTY. AMERICANS FEARED THAT AN OVERLY NEGATIVE RESPONSE SEEMED TO BE EMANATING FROM JERUSALEM AND SADAT MIGHT BECOME DISCOURAGED.

AN ISRAELI SOURCE SAID THAT HAK WAS SO CONCERNED ABOUT REMARKS AT ISRAELI NEWS BRIEFING THAT HE TELEPHONED RABIN TO COMPLAIN....

WHAT IRKED AMERICANS WAS THAT ISRAELIS PRIVATELY SEEMED UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 058931

MUCH LESS NEGATIVE TOWARDEGYPTIAN IDEAS THAN WAS THEIR SPOKESMAN PUBLICLY.

...ISRAELIS, LED BY RABIN, FM ALLON, AND DEFENSE MINISTER PERES, NOT HOSTILE BUT RECEPTIVE TO EGYPTIAN IDEAS. THEY DID NOT REJECT ANYIDEAS OUT OF HAND, AN AMERICAN OFFICIAL, SAID.

INSTEAD RABIN WAS REPORTED TO HAVE TOLD HAK THAT EGYPTIAN VIEWS--MADE IN RESPONSE TO ISRAELI QUESTIONS RELAYED BY HAK--WOULD BE GIVEN CLOSE STUDY AND THAT HE WOULD BE INFORMED OF ISRAELI RESPONSE WHEN HE RETURNED TO JERUSALEM SUNDAY AFTERNOON....

A SENIOR ISRAELI OFFICIAL SAID TONIGHT THAT HE EXPECTED ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE EMPOWERED TO DISCUSS WITHDRAWAL FROM OILFIELDS AND PASSES IN RETURN FOR POLITICAL CONCESSIONS BY EGYPT THAT WOULD MOVE EGYPT AND ISRAEL CLOSER TO PEACE.

BUT HAK WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE TOLD OF ISRAELI UNHAPPINESS WITH MUCH OF WHAT EGYPT HAS OFFERED, OFFICIAL SAID. AMERICANS EXPECT THAT "IDEAS" THAT HAK RECEIVED FROM ISRAELIS WILL INCLUDE QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS ABOUT EGYPTIAN VIEWS....

...IT HAS NOT BEEN CLEAR IN LAST WEEK --FIRST OF THIS MISSION -- WHO MADE FIRST PROPOSALS. BUT ITSEEMS AS IF HAK TOLD EGYPTIANS LAST WEEKEND IN ASWAN THAT THEY HAD TO MAKE SOME INITIAL OFFERS TO ISRAEL TO MEET RABIN'S POLITICAL CONCERNs, AND HE TOOK WITH HIM TO ISRAEL SOME INITIAL IDEAS THAT WERE GIVEN COOL TREATMENT HERE.

LATEST "CONCRETE IDEAS" WERE GIVEN BY SADAT AFTER LONG DISCUSSION YESTERDAY WITH HIS TOP AIDES. HAK NOW BELIEVES THAT ISRAEL MUST MAKE SOME "INPUT", INCLUDING WIDENING NEGOTIATING FLEXIBILITY ON PASSES AND OIL FIELDS TO KEEP TALKS MOVING.

2. BALTSUN, MILLES, JERUSALEM: ISRAEL REACTED CAUTIOSLY YESTERDAY TO NEW EGYPTIAN IDEAS FOR ME PEACE AGREEMENT, CALLING THEM "INSUFFICIENT OR EVEN UNSATISFACTORY."

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 058931

THAT SOMEWHAT CHILLY ASSESSMENT DISTURBED HAK...

..REPORTERS WHO ACCOMPANIED HAK WERE TOLD ON FLIGHT FROM EGYPT TO ISRAEL THAT SECRETARY THINKS "TIME HAS COME FOR ISRAEL TO CONSIDER" INCREASING TERRITORIAL CONCESSIONS IT IS WILLING TO MAKE....

ISRAELI OFFICIALS, SPEAKING PRIVATELY LATER, SAID COMMENTS WERE NOT MEANT TO BE REJECTION OF IDEAS RELAYED TO THEM THRU HAK FROM SADAT OF EGYPT. RATHER, THEY SAID, TONE OF CAUTION WAS AN ATTEMPT TO COUNTERBALANCE WHAT THEY CONSIDER A PREMATURE OPTIMISM FOSTERED BY REPORTS FROM EGYPT.....

SENIOR U.S. OFFICIALS BRIEFING REPORTERS WITH HAK PARTY AFTER ISRAELI OFFICIALS HAD SPOKEN SAID THEY HAD HEARD NO "EXPRESSION OF DISSATISFACTION" FROM ISRAELIS IN COURSE OF THEIR TALKS.

OFFICIALS WERE AFRAID THAT ISRAELI REMARKS MIGHT BE INTERPRETED AS REPRESENTING A DEPARTURE FROM U. S. POSITION.

THAT INTERPRETATION, THEY SAID COULD BE FALSE AND MIGHT
ENDANGER SUCCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS.

HAK WAS UNDERSTOOD TO HAVE BEEN SO DISTURBED THAT ISRAELI
REMARKS MIGHT BE MISINTERPRETED THAT HE CALLED RABIN
IMMEDIATELY AFTER HEARING ABOUT THEM.

SENIOR U. S. OFFICIAL SAID THAT THERE IS "NO DIFFERENCE..
BETWEEN AMERICAN AND ISRAELI PERCEPTION OF PROBLEMS."

ACTUALLY, DESPITE SOME DIFFERENCES IN EMPHASIS, GENERAL
DIRECTION OF ISRAELI REASONING WAS NOT ALL THAT DIFFERENT
FROM HAK'S. ISRAELI OFFICIALS, LIKE HAK, SAID THAT TALKS
HAVE NOW MOVED INTO A NEW PHASE, ONE IN WHICH TWO SIDES
ARE DISCUSSING CONCRETE IDEAS FOR A NEW AGREEMENT.

AND WHILE INDICATING ISRAELI UNHAPPINESS WITH MANY OF
IDEAS BROUGHT FROM EGYPT, THEY SAID THERE WAS SOME MOVE-
MENT "IN A FEW AREAS." THEIR MAIN POINT WAS NOT SO
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 058931

MUCH THAT TALKS ARE IN ANY WAY GOING BADLY AS THAT THERE
IS A LONG WAY TO GO.

"WE FEEL," HE SAID, "THAT IT IS VERY BEGINNING OF PROCESS."

HAK HIMSELF ALTHOUGH HE BELIEVES TALKS ARE PROGRESSING,
SAYS THAT SUCCESS IS FAR FROM CERTAIN. "MY VIEW" HE
TOLD REPORTERS ABOARD EGYPT-ISRAEL FLIGHT, "IS THAT WE
ARE MAKING PROGRESS SLOWLY. I AM HOPEFUL THAT WE CAN
COME TO AN AGREEMENT. BUT IT IS FAR FROM GUARANTEED."...

3. WP, BERGER, 3/14, JERUSALEM: HAK PRESENTED LATEST
EGYPTIAN DISENGAGEMENT PROPOSALS TO ISRAEL TODAY, THEN
TOLD REPORTERS IT WAS "PREMATURE TO PREDICT AN AGREEMENT."

"WE AREMOVING FROM DISCUSSION OF GENERAL PRINCIPLES TO AN
EXAMINATION OF CONCRETE IDEAS." "I AM PLANNING TO STAY
IN AREA UNITL IT IS KNOWN WHETHER AGREEMENT IS POSSIBLE."

SUBDUED ATMOSPHERE IN JERUSALEM CONTRASTED WITH OPTIMISM
IN ASWAN WHERE HAKMET WITH SADAT...

ONE OF ISRAELI NEGOTIATORS SAID THAT WHILE EGYPTIAN
PROPOSALS DID NOT YET GO FAR ENOUGH, "CHANCES ARE STILL
GOOD" FOR GEZTING A SETTLEMENT. BARGAINING PROCESS WAS
JUST STARTING.

AFP QUOTED SENIOR U. S. OFFICIAL IN JERUSALEM AS SAYING
IT WILL PROBABLY BE ANOTHER 10 DAYS BEFORE IT IS CLEAR
WHETHER NEW DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT IS POSSIBLE.

SPEAKING AFTER 2-1/2 HOUR MEETING IN WHICH HAK PRESENTED EGYPT'S POSITION TO ISRAELI NEGOTIATING TEAM, ONE ISRAELI PARTICIPANT SAID "WHAT HE BROUGHT IS CERTAINLY AN INDICATION THAT EGYPTIANS ARE MOVING." BUT, "ON MAJOR ISSUES--LIKE NON-BELLIGERENCY--I DON'T THINK WE HAD A SATISFACTORY ANSWER."

...AMERICAN REPORTERS TRAVELING WITH HAK WERE TOLD THAT SOME OF POINTS THAT HAD BEEN RAISED BY ISRAELIS IN PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS HAD, AT LAST, BEEN ANSWERED, ALTHOUGH HAK UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 06 STATE 058931

HAS NOT SAID THAT ANSWERS ARE SATISFACTORY. TALKS WERE SAID TO BE AT A CRITICAL JUNCTURE BECAUSE CONCRETE IDEAS ARE NOW NEEDED FROM ISRAEL.

EARLIER IN DAY REPORTERS TRAVELING WITH HAK FROM SADAT'S COUNTRY RESIDENCE IN ASWAN TO ISRAEL WERE TOLD THAT NEGOTIATIONS HAD REACHED POINT WHERE ISRAELI CABINET WOULD HAVE TO CONSIDER WHETHER TO APPROVE A WITHDRAWAL FROM FORCES BEHIND SINAI MT PASSES AND OUT OF OILFIELDS.

WIRES

UPI FROM DAMASCUS SAID HAK ARRIVED SYRIA SATURDAY FOR SECOND TRY AT STOPPING SYRIA 'FROM FIGHTING NEW PEACE AGREEMENT HE IS TRYING TO NEGOTIATE BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT.' STORY SAID HAK "ALSO PLANNED TO HUNT FOR A WAY TO GET NEGOTIATIONS GOING LATER BETWEEN SYRIA AND ISRAEL--ALTHOUGH THIS NOW APPEARED UNLIKELY BECAUSE OF ISRAELI OPPOSITION, A SENIOR OFFICIAL ABORAD HAK'S PLANE SAID.

RADIO

KALB, EARLY MORNING, 3/15: HAK FLEW INTO DAMASCUS TODAY TO HEAD OFF SYRIAN EXPLOSION THAT COULD DISRUPT HIS MIDDLE MAN EFFORT TO ARRANGE A MAJOR SINAI AGREEMENT BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL. SYRIA'S STRONG MAN RULER ASAD IS HIGHLY SUSPICIOUS OF SECRETARY'S EFFORT.... LAST SUNDAY WHEN HAK VISITED DAMASCUS FOR FIRST TIME DURING THIS SHUTTLE, ASSAD THREW SOME KISSINGERIAN PHILOSOPHY AT HAK HIMSELF. HE SAID, ACCORDING TO ONE EAR WITNESS, THAT ISRAEL IS DOOMED. WHY? BECAUSE ASSAD EXPLAINED, THE U.S. WILL GROW TIRED OF SUPPORTING HER, JUST AS U. S. IS NOW TIRED OF SUPPORTING CAMBODIA AND SVN. THAT LOGIC ALMOST SOUNDED PLANTED, AS THOUGH HAK TOLD IT TO ASSAD SO THAT ASS COULD TELL IT BACK TO HAK AND HAK COULD THEN TELL IT TO ISRAELIS SO THAT THEY COULD LEAK IT TO PRESS AND THEN AMERICAN PEOPLE COULD SEE INNER WISDOM OF LONG RANGE DOMINOES; CAMBODIA FALLING IN

SOUTHEAST ASIA AND EVENTUALLY KNOCKING OVER ISRAEL IN ME.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 07 STATE 058931

IT IS REALLY A FAR-FETCHED SCENARIO BUT HAK SEEMS TO BELIEVE IT. HE IS DEEPLY DEPRESSED BY SPECTACLE OF U.S. TEARING ITSELF TO PIECES ONCE AGAIN OVER AN ISSUE SUCH AS MONEY FOR CAMBODIA. WHEN ISSUES WAS GETTING AMERICAN TROOPS AND PRISONERS OUT OF INDOCHINA, HAK COULD SEE LOGIC OF ANGUISH, BUT IN HIS MIND--SINCE ISSUE WAS NO LONGER MEN BUT MONEY--HE CANNOT SEE LOGIC OF THOSE WHO SAY "NO MORE MONEY FOR CAMBODIA, NO MORE KILLING IN INDOCHINA, ENOUGH". TO HAK, IN AN ODD WAY, MANNER IN WHICH CAMBODIA FALLS, IF THAT BE HER DESTINY, BECOMES CRITICALLY IMPORTANT. HE USED TO SAY ABOUT SVN THAT WAY U.S. WITHDRAWS FROM SVN IS AS CRUCIAL AS FACT OF WITHDRAWAL ITSELF. HE IS NOW MAKING SAME ARGUMENT ABOUT CAMBODIA SO MANY LIVES LATER. GIVE CAMBODIA THE MQNEY, HE SEEMS TO BE SAYING, AND IF SHE THEN FALLS, THEN SO BE IT. AT LEAST WE SHALL LOOK AS THOUGH WE HAVE DONE OUR DUTY. THERE IS NO SIGN THAT HAK THINKS HIS NEGOTIATION IN ME WILL BE HURT BY A POLICY FAILURE IN SOTHEAST ASIA, BUT IT MAY TURN OUT THAT WAY AND HE THINKS BATTLEFIELD AND NOT NEGOTIATING TABLE WILL ULTIMATELY DETERMINE CAMBODIA'S FATE. HIS VISION IS BLEAK. INGERSOLL

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